DEKALB
HISTORY
COURTHOUSE
FIRE
1913
A19

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ABOUT THE DEKALB COUNTY COURTHOUSE RECORDS FIRE FEBRUARY 08, 1913

(ALSO ARTICLE ABOUT BUILDER OF OLD COURTHOUSE)

EXTRACTED FROM
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ROSELYN WELLS

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The Auburn Courier

VOLUME XLVIII—No. 6 AUBURN, DeKALB COUNTY, INDIANA, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13 1913

AUBURN'S WORST FIRE

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POLICE GUARD THE RECORDS

Rescuers Searched for Valuable Papers Sunday and Monday and Many Charred VoluminousRecords and Partially Burned Papers of Immeasurable Value were Uncovered from Mass of Ruins and Carried to Safety

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It is claimed by those who are in a position to know, that all the records and papers in the auditor's office of most consequence are safe. This includes the assessor's records and everything pertaining to the county assessor's office. In the auditor's office were the plans and specifications and all the papers pertaining with the new court house structure. Had these papers been destroyed it might have lead to complications. Much of the credit

TO THE COURIER READERS

Through the courtesy of Editor J. S. Buchanan of the Dispatch, the Auburn Daily Courier, within forty eight hours from the time its offices were reduced to ashes, reaches its readers today with a detailed account of the holocaust of Saturday night, when the McIntyre building, between Eighth and Ninth streets on Jackson, was destroyed.

The company has a temporary office in the lobby of the Dispatch office, but at present only one telephone, the Bell, has been installed. Subscribers can reach the office by calling Bell 172.

In this issue will be found a picture of all that remains of the Courier plant, which bears mute witness of the extent of the fire. All the office equipment in the office proper and in the composing and press rooms was lost, and all that escaped were the subscription files, the books, newspaper cuts and some office stationery, all of which were kept in the large vault in the office.

While it is the fond hope of the company to perpetuate the Courier, and plans are already under way, no definite method of procedure has taken form. The management extends its thanks in advance to those who will cheerfully forbear whatever inconvenience may be felt by reason of our recent loss. Each day the Daily Dispatch will leave the press first and the Courier will follow. Therefore, if your paper reaches you late, you will understand the situation and make allowance accordingly.

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A line of police was established Sunday morning and rescuers went to work at once to save what court house records were not yet totally destroyed, but which were yet smouldering in the debris. All day Sunday this hunt was continued and taken up again Monday. The damaged books and papers were carried to a place of safety. Voluminous record books were found so badly defaced that they were scarcely recognizable.

Business men of the city who have the reputation of rising to meet emergencies rose up Sunday ready to do anything possible to assist the men upon whom was thrust heavy adversity Sunday. They are still standing shoulder to shoulder to help most commendable, indeed, and most appreciable, too.

COMMERCIAL CLUB ACT

Miles Baxter, secretary of the Commercial club, called a hurried meeting Sunday afternoon for the purpose of discussing plans for temporary quarters for the Double Fabric Tire company and for encouraging the continuance of the Courier.

Two committees were appointed, one to confer with Messrs Willennar and Murray of the Double Fabric Tire concern consisted of C.M.Brown, chairman, I. M. Zent, J. W. Sheffler, and William Schaab. The committee to confer with W. H. McIntyre relative to the Courier consists of H. R. Culbertson, chairman, Fred I. Nebeling and Michael Boland.

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At a meeting of the county commissioners Sunday afternoon it was decided to establish temporary quarters for the county offices in the assembly room in the southeast corner of the new court house. The county records were being assorted and work of establishing offices began Monday morning. An entrance to the room will be made at the south side of the building, directly north of the county jail.

J. B. Goodall, the contractor, was willing to do whatever possible to provide quarters as quickly as possible. Heat will be turned on and it is believed that the quarters will be comfortable.

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Victor McCord was on hand Monday taking orders for office material and all possible haste will be made to equip the office at once.

W. H. McIntyre, who owned the large building destroyed, carried $30,000 insurance which is only about 50 cents on the dollar, the value placed on it by Mr. McIntyre. He also carried $3,500 insurance over the Courier plant.

In seven different companies the county's property was insured for $6,000 which perhaps fairly well covers the loss so far as monetary value is concerned.

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Buildings facing Eighth street were more or less damaged. Mr. McIntyre's factory building No. 1, just across Eighth street from the scene of the big fire, caught fire but the fiend was conquered. Had the blaze not been gotten under subjection, nothing could have saved the block in which is located the City National bank, Central Union Telephone company, Western Union Telegraph, Schaab Bros. & Co., George Kuhlman, Ed W. Hicks, Clayton Kettering, Arthur Grube, Frank Hoff, Empire Theater, Auburn Vulcanizing works, Baker's Bakery, Miller's barber shop, Smith's photograph gallery, etc. whose respective places of business are household terms to people in this city and surrounding country for miles around.

The fire came most inopportunely to the Double Fabric Tire Company. It was just the beginning of the busiest season of the year. Thousands of dollars have been spent in advertising the business and the regular flow of orders is just beginning to be increased by the tide of early spring automobile season demands. Sixty-two people were engaged meeting the demands made on this company. The company valued its holdings at $30,000 with $16,000 insurance. It was one of the most thriving industries of the city and was just on the eve of even greater things. A. L. Murray and W. H. Willennar are the backbone of the company.

The Double Fabric Tire company has temporary quarters in the gas office where they will carry on their correspondence. It was stated Monday that the company hopes to be manufacturing interlocks at the earliest possible date. All that was saved from the company's quarters were the typewriters, desks, office equipment, office files, letters etc. Machinery, raw stock and all of the finished products were lost and that which found temporary safety in the streets caught fire and most of this was rendered useless.

THE RECORDS

Every property owner in DeKalb county is interested in those records on which is based the title to his or her property. These are beyond all question the most valuable documents in the county. Thousands of people in this county will rest easier when they learn that all the records of recorder's office have been saved. Much of the credit of saving these valuable books is due to Samuel Haverstock, former county recorder. He was among the first to be on the scene and he threw himself into the work of saving the books and papers. Four years in the office made him familiar with every public document and he knew where they were, could place his hand on any book in the dark. He helped organize the men who were ready to help and in this manner the records were all carefully removed. He staid at his post of duty until every book and paper was out. Some of the valuable books were in the large vault and it had already been a question where the vault was fire-proof. Mr. Haverstock shared this doubt and he opened the vault and saw that the valuable books and papers were all removed to a place of safety. The deeds, mortgages, lein records, plat books and all other books of the recorder's office are now in the assembly room of the new court house in a fireproof building where there it no danger of fire and the property owners and the general public never want them to pass through the same ordeal again.

The records of the county treasurer's office are practically all saved. Mr. Oberlin and his deputy, Roy Oberlin, were at the scene of conflagration and personally assisted in the removal of the records and receipt stubs. The serious situation that confronted the treasurer was the sale of delinquent property which was advertised to be sold Monday morning at the treasurer's office. The sale went on in the afternoon in the new court house and it is the opinion of those who are in a position to know that the sale will be legal. So very few copies of the listing is missing from the files and it is understood that the duplicate will be replaced by the making out of new duplicates from the data that the county auditor has on hand.

It is claimed by those who are in a position to know that all the records and papers in the auditor's office of most consequence are safe. This includes the assessor's records and everything pertaining to the county assessor's office. In the auditor's office were the plans and specifications and all the papers connected with the new court house structure. Had these papers been destroyed it might have lead to complications. Much of the credit of saving the auditor's records was duly to the efforts of Deputy Stanley Nelson who braved the danger of falling walls and flames and staid on duty until the last book and papers were removed. Also Auditor Madden who was game to the core.

Sheriff Hoff saved some of his furniture including the typewriter. The books and papers are not of as much importance as of other offices.

On account of the clerk's office being in the second story and almost inaccessable the loss is serious. The volunteers and others interested who attempted to save the records did not know where the valuable papers and books were kept, and on account of the darkness it was impossible for those not familiar with the office to pick out the important documents. At this time it is not possible to tell how serious is the loss to those who were interested in estates, wills, judgments and pending cases. The records of the health board, the coroner's report and many other important papers are filed in this office. Marriage license books, judgment records, the papers on important cases especially those pending in appeals are all supposed to have been destroyed. Under the ruins parts of papers, fragments of books and blanks are being dug out but what is lost and what saved it is difficult to state. There are several cases of importance that were decided at the December term of court that were pending before the court on motions for new trials but if the papers in these cases are destroyed it will be impossible to perfect an appeal to the higher courts. Among these cases are the Dilgard case against the B & O. The Hamilton case from Fort Wayne involving property of considerable value, the Troy township school case. It is said by attorneys interested in the latter case that the papers in this case were not in the clerk's office at the time of the fire.

To bring order out of all the confusion incident to the loss of books and papers, the bar association of DeKalb county will probably meet and request Judge Powers to make the March term very brief and continue the cases to the May term when the court room in the new court house will be in condition to be used, it is thought. Judge Powers was sent for but he could not come because of court matters Monday.

The four pumps at the water works plant were taxed to their fullest capacity, but were wholly unable to cope with the situation. A forty-pound pressure was used to force the water into the pipes but the supply was inadequate. Sam Davenport, superintendent of the electric light plant, says that there was no more water to be had. The first pressure was good, but as more hose was added, the streams grew less and by the time the eight were working the pressure was very weak. Considering this handicap the fire boys did good work to keep the mad flend confined to the one brick block.

Notes.

What little the Double Fabric Tire Company saved was hauled away Sunday morning and stored until it was needed.

A bucket brigade, with the supply dipped from the gutter, saved the Gaskell livery barn just across the street to the south. The assistance was most valuable.

It was not known until Monday that Mrs. John Zimmerman must explain what it was she is credited with having rescued three pairs of lard from George Brugh's store and carried them to her home.

(Continued to 4th page)

DOUBLE FABRIC FINDS LOCATION

In the Zimmerman Manufacturing Company's Building on North Indiana Avenue.

The Double Fabric Tire company will locate in the Zimmerman Manufacturing company on North Indiana Avenue and it will be but a very few days until the finished product will be turned out. This was determined this forenoon. The committee appointed at the commercial club meeting yesterday got in some good work and company and committee united in one effort—to get at least a temporary headquarters. The company's present office is in the gas office.

Loss will Reach $100,000--Fire Department Handicapped by Low Pressure Could not Cope with Situation--Contents of Worst Inflamable Composition

Fire, the origin of which is mysteriously clustered around an explosion believed to be in the rear of the Courier, the nature of which is unknown, reduced the McIntyre factory building on west Eighth street to a smouldering pile of ashes here early Saturday night. While it is beyond the power of human foresight to predict with any degree of certainty the amount of the loss sustained it is believed, on good authority, that the holacaust will leave fully $100,000 loss of property in its wake.

Included in the loss were the machinery, equipment and stock belonging to the Double Fabric Tire company, the salesroom of the McIntyre Automobile company, the court records and county records that the volunteers were unable to carry to safety, the entire office and equipment for the Auburn Courier company and a quantity of automobile and carriage stock belonging to the McIntyre people.

The first alarm was received by the Bell Telephone company, a block away and in a moment more the Home telephone operators were frantic in their efforts to advise the fire department of the news. When the city fire department reached the scene the interior of the building was a mass of flames. The volunteer firemen proved that many heroes and although they labored fearlessly in face of innumerable odds, all that they could do or even hope to do was to confine the fire to the factory building.

Cool headedness marked the attitude of the first arrivals at the scene and fully ten scores of men, grasping the danger that was impending to the county records entered the building and labored arduously until the flames compelled them to leave what remained to the mercy of the flames. What were saved were carried to the new court house. Linemen for both telephone companies entered the building and many telephones were snatched from the desks.

Several minutes before the department reached the scene, Wayne Weaver, the Fort Wayne News carrier boy for Auburn advised Porter Ferrell, a reporter of the Courier, of the fire and in a minute more Ferrell was on the scene eager to save whatever was movable.

In this he succeeded only partially. Entering the office he turned on the lights which had not yet been cut off. The front office was filled with smoke but the reporter succeeded in saving a typewriter belonging to J. Frank Cramer, the lynotype operator for the Courier and one for himself.

In the Courier office the vault door was locked as well as the door for the safe and early Saturday night members of the Courier company entertained hopes of saving the records and company files. $5,000 insurance on the Courier office was carried by the Courier company.

When it was seen that all efforts to save the Courier office equipment would prove futile the firemen directed their attention to the court house hoping that they could arrest the flames before they reached the interior of the temporary quarters. Before the fire had raged for a half hour Tom Stutz and a fellow workman by the name of Till fell exhausted at the office door. It was carried to safety as was made for Till who w

The weakest cog in A tire machine of municip her fire department showed up again in all its conditions. Water pressure was low Every fireman did his best and that is all that could be asked of any man. Had it availed anything they would have gladly entered the building in search of vantage-ground from which to wage a battle but the folly of such a procedure was obvious

When the flames had apparently reaped vengeance on the contents of the salesrooms and the office of the Courier the west wall to the building fell with a crash. By this time the flames had gained a wonderful headway on the interior of the court house and it could be seen that all hopes to save the quarters were gone.

Repeated requests were made upon the water plant for more pressure but this was impossible as all pumps were working. It was proposed to call the Fort Wayne department but when it was found that the pressure was lacking this idea was abandoned. The Fort Wayne chemical equipment would have been all that could have been used.

The Garrett department reached the scene but no other out-of-town assistance was called.

Fire broke out in the roof of the Swineford livery barn but this was kept in control. Across the street from the factory the flames gained a foothold in the Hoff building. All material in the room of printing presses and sheets from books were carried away as mute remembrances of the holacaust.

W. H. McIntyre, owner of the Courier and the building was en route home from Chicago when he attended the automobile show. He was on B & O train No. 6 and telegrams reached him before he arrived home.

All the front windows at the Dilgard morgue, on the second floor of the new Hoff building were broken as well as the large plate glass windows to the lower floor. The fronts to the Baker bakery, the Miller barber shop and the Smith photograph gallery were charred and windows were completely demolished.

When the flames like tongues hungry beasts reached out over bridge connecting the second to the two factories was first observed it was believed that the entire bridge would be burned but only a portion was of the structure suffered one end dropping to the ground.

The inflamable contents of the entire building made fighting the fire a most uphill task. Paper, the Courier office, inks, rubber, etc. Fabric Tire company

The business men occupying rooms on West Seventh street moved their wares to the street in preparation of whatever might come. After the east wall fell it was seen that it building occupied by the Auburn Hardware company would be probably be spared. Telephone poles nearby were badly charred, the company's employes were stationed trees were stripped of their foliage and the front of the livery barn and the Hoff building were deeply charred.

At the City National Bank block the Bell Telephone company

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THE CAUSE.

What the cause of the fire was will never be known. Different persons report seeing the blaze in its earliest inception, but the reports differ somewhat, yet agree that it was near the partition between the Courier office and the McIntyre sales room but so quickly did it spread that it was but a moment until that portion of the building was a seething mass of flames, a veritable furnace. Perhaps the one who knows as much as anyone is Glenn Winebrenner, who was acting as nightwatch at the temporary court house in place of his father, Howard Winebrenner, who was at supper. Mr. Winebrenner was secured by the regular nightwatch, Hiram Enzor, to serve in that capacity for the night.

Glenn Winebrenner says the first he knew of the fire was smoke issuing forth from a westerly direction which was apparently coming from the Courier office. Manager Monte L. Green was one of the last to leave the Courier office in the evening and he said he was at the rear and that everything was all right and he had scarcely reached his home when the alarm was sounded. John Cramer, linotype operator, left the office a few moments before and says that before so doing he looked after the gas at lynotype personally to see that it was all right.

Wayne Weaver and Paul Farley are among the first who saw the fire. They were delivering papers and were near the James residence at VanBuren and Ninth streets when they were attracted by lights in the windows of the second floor of the building. The windows on the third floor, on the west side were also aglow. From this it might be believed that the fire had its origin in either the second or third floor.

This also might lead to the suspicion that the fire started in the rooms near the freight elevator shaft, between the ware room and the county offices. The flames may have found access to the upper floors throguh the shaft.

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Two committees were appointed, one to confer with Messrs Willennar and Murray of the Double Fabric Tire concern consists of C.M.Brown, chairman, I. M. Zent, J. W. Sheffer, and William Schaab. The committee to confer with W. H. McIntyre relative to the Courier consists of H. R. Culbertson, chairman, Fred J. Nebelung and Michael Boland.

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It is claimed by those who are in a position to know, that all the records and papers in the auditor's office of most consequence are safe. This includes the assessor's records and everything pertaining to the county assessor's office. In the auditor's office were the plans and specifications and all the papers connected with the new court house structure. Had these papers been destroyed it might have lead to complications. Much of the credit of saving the auditor's records was duly to the efforts of Deputy Stanley Nelson who braved the danger of falling walls and flames and staid on duty until the last book and papers were removed, also Auditor Madden who was game to the core.

Sheriff Hoff saved some of his furniture including the typewriter. The books and papers are not of as much importance as of other offices.

On account of the clerk's office being in the second story and almost inaccessable the loss is serious. The volunteers and others interested who attempted to save the records did not know where the valuable papers and books were kept, and on account of the darkness it was impossible for those not familiar with the office to pick out the important documents. At this time it is not possible to tell how serious is the loss to those who were interested in estates, wills, judgments and pending cases. The records of the health board, the coroner's report and many other important papers are filed in this office. Marriage license books, judgment records, the papers on important cases especially those pending in appeals are all supposed to have been destroyed. Under the ruins parts of papers, fragments of books and blanks are being dug out but what is lost and what saved it is difficult to state. There are several cases of importance that were decided at the December term of court that were pending before the court on motions for new trials but if the papers in these cases are destroyed it will be impossible to perfect an appeal to the higher courts. Among these cases are the Dilgard case against the B & O. The Hamilton case from Fort Wayne involving property of considerable value, the Troy township school case. It is said by attorneys interested in the latter case that the papers in this case were not in the clerk's office at the time of the fire.

To bring order out of all the confusion incident to the loss of books and papers, the bar association of DeKalb county will probably meet and request Judge Powers to make the March term very brief and continue the cases to the May term when the court room in the new court house will be in condition to be used, it is thought. Judge Powers was sent for but he could not come because of court matters Monday.

The four pumps at the water works plant were taxed to their fullest capacity, but were wholly unable to cope with the situation. A forty-pound pressure was used to force the water into the pipes but the supply was inadequate. Sam Davenport, superintendent of the electric light plant, says that there was no more water to be had. The first pressure was good, but as more hose was added, the streams grew less and by the time the eight were working the pressure was very weak. Considering this handicap, the fire boys did good work to keep the mad fiend confined to the one brick block.

DOUBLE FABRIC FINDS LOCATION

In the Zimmerman Manufacturing Company's Building on North Indiana Avenue.

The Double Fabric Tire company will locate in the Zimmerman Manufacturing company on North Indiana Avenue and it will be but a very few days until the finished product will be turned out. This was determined this forenoon. The committee appointed at the commercial club meeting yesterday got in some good work and company and committee united in one effort—to get at least a temporary headquarters. The company's present office is in the gas office.

Notes.

What little the Double Fabric Tire Company saved was hauled away Sunday morning and stored until it was needed.

A bucket brigade, with the supply dipped from the gutter, saved the Gale livery barn, just across the street to the south. The assistance was most valuable.

It was not excitement, but Mrs. John Zimmerman must explain what it was. She is credited with having rescured three pails of lard from George Brugh's store and carried them to her home.

When the vault at the City National bank was opened Monday it was found that nearly all the books placed therein belonged to the recorder's office. In the list were tax duplicates, entry books, registry fees, sheriff election dockets and deed records. The will records, which some hoped were placed therein, were not found and hopes to recover them are practically abandoned.

Fire Chief Brandon, in behalf of the firemen, wish to thank all those who lent them assistance as well as those who at the risk of their lives volunteered and went to the top of buildings and waged a vigorous battle with the flames in order to keep the hardware block and adjacent buildings from catching fire. Their hardships when the flames blew into their faces are fully appreciated by the chief and is worthy of favorable comment.

John Leasure, of Ground Hog fame, very calmly withdrew papers of value from their accustomed places and put them in a bushel basket and upon them put a quantity of silver ware. At a crucial moment a volunteer carried them from the hardware store and when Mr. Leasure thought of them again he did not know their whereabouts but started on a search. He found them on the sidewalk in front of the McCord drug store.

Frank Pyle, Union township trustees claims the distinction of sending in the first alarm of the fire. Leaving the Gale livery barn, at the rear of the Swineford hotel where he kept his team, Mr. Pyle witnessed flames through the west window which he says were little advanced. Returning to the barn he turned in the alarm. The telephone operators coroborate this when they declare that the first alarm came from the Gale barn. When Mr. Pyle returned to his rig which he left in the street the fire had already gained wonderful headway.

Having received the story of the fire through the American Press Association, the Toledo Times sent a reporter, Vincent P. Oatis, to Auburn Sunday morning. Mr. Oatis and H. E. Butler, representing the Gaumont Weekly Moving Picture company, made a number of pictures of the fire and it is possible that these pictures will be seen at an Auburn picture show before many weeks. The men stated that had it not been necessary for them to report on a fire in Toledo Saturday night, they would have reached Auburn before the sun first shone over the ruins.

After the complete ruin to the entire block looked certain all hopes of the Courier management centered in recovering the office files, the books and the subscription lists. These hopes matured. Early Sunday the Courier office vault was opened and with the exceptiqn of a few water soaked papers everything therein was secured. In this vault were kept the daily and weekly subscription files, some files of the Daily Courier, office stationery, newspa-

pers, cuts of public men and of leading figures in DeKalb county, numbering machine and other office equipment. All of these were secured. The office safe in the Courier fulfilled its mission. Prying open the doors with pick and wedge it was found that the contents were saved. An old paper containing the sketch of the assassination of President Lincoln, some money, letters and books were taken from the safe.

Explosion Probable Cause.

Fire, the origin of which is mysteriously clustered around an explosion believed to be in the rear of the Courier, the nature of which is unknown, reduced the McIntyre factory building on west Eighth street to a smouldering pile of ashes here early Saturday night. While it is beyond the power of human foresight to predict with any degree of certainty the amount of the loss sustained it is believed, on good authority, that the holacaust will leave fully $100,000 loss of property in its wake.

Included in the loss were the machinery, equipment and stock belonging to the Double Fabric Tire company, the salesroom of the McIntyre Automobile company, the court records and county records that the volunteers were unable to carry to safety, the entire office and equipment for the Auburn Courier company and a quantity of automobile and carriage stock belonging to the McIntyre people.

The first alarm was received by the Bell Telephone company, a block away and in a moment more the Home telephone operators were frantic in their efforts to advise the fire department of the news. When the city fire department reached the scene the interior of the building was a mass of flames. The volunteer firemen proved that many heroes and although they labored fearlessly in face of inumerable odds, all that they could do or even hope to do was to confine the fire to the factory building.

Cool headedness marked the attitude of the first arrivals at the scene and fully ten scores of men, grasping the danger that was impending to the county records entered the building and labored arduously until the flames compelled them to leave what remained to the mercy of the flames. What were saved were carried to the new court house. Linemen for both telephone companies entered the building and many telephones were snatched from the desks.

Several minutes before the department reached the scene, Wayne Weaver, the Fort Wayne News carrier boy for Auburn advised Forraker Ferrell, a reporter of the Courier, of the fire and in a minute more Ferrell was on the scene eager to save whatever was movable.

In this he succeeded only partially. Entering the office he turned on the lights which had not yet been cut off. The front office was filled with smoke but the reporter succeeded in saving a typewriter belonging to J. Frank Cramer, the lynotype operator for the Courier and one for himself.

In the Courier office the vault door was locked as well as the door for the safe and early Saturday night members of the Courier company entertained hopes of saving the records and company files. $8,500 insurance on the Courier office was carried by the Courier company.

When it was seen that all efforts to save the Courier office equipment would prove futile the firemen directed their attention to the court house hoping that they could arrest the flames before they reached the interior of the temporary quarters. Before the fire had raged for a half hour Tom Stutz and a fellow workman by the name of Till fell exhausted at the office door. Stutz was carried to safety and a search was made for Till who was found.

The weakest cog in Auburn's fire machine of municipal ownership, her fire department, once more showed up again in all its weakest conditions. Water pressure was low. Every fireman did his best and that is all that could be asked of any man. Had it availed anything they would have gladly entered the building in search of vantage-ground from which to wage a battle but the folly of such a proceedure was obvious.

When the flames had apparently reaped vengeance on the contents of the salesrooms and the office of the Courier the west wall to the building fell with a crash. By this time the flames had gained a wonderful headway on the interior of the court house and it could be seen that all hopes to save the quarters were gone.

Repeated requests were made upon the water plant for more pressure but this was impossible as all pumps were working. It was proposed to call the Fort Wayne department but when it was found that the pressure but this was impossible as all pumps were working. It was proposed to call the Fort Wayne department but when it was found that the pressure was lacking this idea was abandoned. The Fort Wayne chemical equipment would have been all that could have been used.

The Garrett department reached the scene but no other out-of-town assistance was called.

Fire broke out in the roof of the Swineford livery barn but this was kept in control. Across the street from the factory the flames gained a foothold in the Hoff building. All the plate glass was broken here but further than that little damage was done. Fears that the factory across the street would go with the flames were allayed when a bucket brigade mounted the roof and extinguished the flames.

The business men occupying rooms on West Seventh street moved their wares to the street in preparation of whatever might come. After the east walls fell it was seen that the building occupied by the Auburn Hardware company would in all probability be spared. Telephone poles nearby were badly charred, the company's cables were severed, trees were stripped of their form and the front of the livery barn and the Hoff building were deeply charred.

At the City National Bank block the Bell Telephone compa[illegible] W[illegible]

[illegible] pieces of printing presses and sheets from books were carried away as mute remembrances of the holacaust.

W. H. McIntyre, owner of the Courier and the building was enroute home from Chicago where he attended the automobile show. He was on B & O train No. 6 and telegrams reached him before he arrived home.

All the front windows at the Dilgard morgue, on the second floor of the new Hoff building were broken as well as the large plate glass windows to the lower floor. The fronts to the Baker bakery, the Miller barber shop and the Smith photograph gallery were charred and windows were completely demolished.

When the flames like tongues hungry beasts reached out over the bridge connecting the second floors to the two factories was first observed it was believed that the entire bridge would be burned but only a portion was of the structure suffered

one end dropping to the ground.

The inflamable contents of the entire building made fighting the fire a most uphill task. Paper in the Courier office, fabric kinds, rubber, etc., Fabric Tire company d material in the room Mr. McIntyre, papers, books furniture dried by age in the court room, etc., how could one conceive of a more combustible quantity of material. It was as so many matches once touched off.

Perhaps Auburn people never saw such a sight here at home, and perhaps never had occasion to be more nervous. It was a common sight to see people on the roofs of buildings to stop any inroads cinders might try to make. The flames were seen for many miles and scores of calls came to the city to inquire what it was, and hundreds came in person. All agreed at one stage that the entire business block north and east of the burning building was doomed.

Chemicals brought from the Zimmerman Manufacturing company were used to stop the fire fiend in the Baker's bakery, Miller barber shop and the Smith gallery.

The McIntyre building faces on two streets, Eighth street on the north and West Ninth street on the south with Jackson street on the west. Immediately east of the factory stands the Auburn Hardware company building. South of this building are the Schaab Clothing company store, the Jones dry goods store, the Tarney building recently vacated by a meat market and the Nebeling dry goods company store.

When fire was discovered by the two boys it was about 6:30 o'clock.

The Loss

Just what the loss will total cannot be intelligently guessed at this time but a conservative estimate is $100,000. No value can be put on the court house contents, even though part of records were saved. The building itself could not be built for a fourth of the above estimate. The Double Fabric Tire company's loss will be heavy. New machinery was recently bought with a view of enlarging and the finished product runs into money fast.

The McIntyre salesroom contents would run into the thousands, saying nothing of the material stored in the third story, belonging to the W. H. McIntyre company. The Courier office remains yet to be taken into consideration, besides the damage to surrounding buildings.

COURT HOUSE TO BE PRESSED INTO SERVICE

Commissioners and Contractor J. B. Goodall Entered Into Contract Monday Afternoon —Additional Notes.

The county commissioners, after covering the ground in the matter of securing offices and court room for the officials, found that it would cost the county a hundred or more dollars for rent and would require the purchasing of stoves and the furnishing of coal, turned to Contractor Goodall for help out in their troubles and an agreement was reached Monday afternoon.

The terms of the contracts in substance between the county and Mr. Goodall are as follows: The county is to have the use of the assembly room, the assessor's and custodian's office and work rooms of the different officials are so far finished as to be ready for occupancy. No charge is to be paid for the use of the rooms by the second party. The first party is to pay all expenses of making the rooms ready for occupancy, to pay for all material and labor necessary and when vacated remove all material.

The county is to pay all the expense of heating which includes coal and fireman. The heating is for the court house and fuel and the heat must be such as to enable the workmen to continue their work with safety. Coal on hand is to be paid for at cost.

The south entrance is to be used and privilege is given to install telephones and electric lights. This contract for use and occupancy is no to be taken as a final acceptance of the court house or any part thereof.

There has been some criticism made against the commissioners for renting the building that has been destroyed. At the time the contract was made no better building could be secured in Auburn available for the purposes of county offices and the rent was deemed reasonable. This is no time for fault finding and unjust criticism.

Because of the rush incidental in caring for the fire, our neighbor, The Courier, and a few other extras, the news service is hardly up to normal today but we believe people are more interested in the fire than anything else.

W. D. DeHority, the head of the State Board of Accounts at Indianapolis has wired the county officials his willingness to send two expert accountants here to assist in re-establishing order in the county records His offer has been accepted and the experts are expected at any time.

Senator VanAuken, the official court reporter, has sustained a heavy loss not covered by insurance. All the short hand reports of the cases tried have been destroyed and as a consequence no transcripts of cases can be made. The fees on the Fort Wayne school case would have been worth at least two hundred dollars.

PHEUS WHEELOCK OF YEARS AGO

Man, Now Afflicted, Has Been a Noted Contractor and Bridge Man.

(W. H. McIntosh.)

after another, persons well n for prominence in social, ofd business affairs and relave passed from our midst here and there an octogenains.

neration has arisen and e have come to Auburn nselves of its numerous vantages.

occupy places once filled familiar town residents names, even much less sonalities, have mostly been en.

heus Wheelock is a represente of the old Auburn where he lived all the years of her rise om an obscure village to a thriving, beautiful little city.

This man, now verging upon eighty-five years, was long a leading contractor and builder, not only in DeKalb county, and in Indiana, but in other states and his handiwork is yet evident in the large and durable bridges of his construction.

He is remembered as the builder of the recent court house, denounced as a fire-trap but actually fire-proof and of such solid construction that even dynamite failed without repeating charges to bring its tower to the ground.

Let it be understood that this tribute is no eulogy but a plain statement of fact regarding a man who, by natural bent and ample experience during his early life, became thoroughly qualified for his profession.

Mr. Wheelock was born of Scottish ancestry at Rome, Oneida county, New York, September 16, 1828, and his youth was passed largely in the mills of which his father was a skilled mill wright and, owner and which were located upon the banks of the Genese. At the mills his close study of kinds and qualities of lumber made him available later as purchaser of the lumber required for purposes of ship building.

In 1847 when but nineteen years of age, he met at Rochester and there was married to Miss Rosanna McKay and the young people removed to Coburg, Canada, where children were born and where he pursued his avocation of selecting and passing on timber for his father's mills.

The call of the wild induced him to go west in 1855, and in February he with others of his wife's family arrived in DeKalb county, and for some months was the guest of his

brother-in-law, James R. Cosper, former resident four miles east of Auburn.

He moved with his family to a house near Lintz lake, Richland township, where with others, he built and operated a steam lumber mill.

During the war for the Union a law was passed and became operative in June 1863 to enroll those men of age to perform military duties in preparation for a draft and Alpheus Wheelock was one of the eight officers commissioned for DeKalb county for this purpose by Gov. O. P. Morton. It is on record that he discharged his difficult duty faithfully and of the eight enrolling officers, he was the last survivor.

When the court house was completed there remained a surplus of brick which Mr. Wheelock utilized in building two houses. One of these is the present residence of John Henry on Main and Tenth streets, and the other is the octagonal dwelling in which he made his home on Indiana Avenue and Seventh street.

The plat known as McFarland's addition to Auburn was owned by Mr. Wheelock and by him was exchanged for a fine large Ohio farm but agriculture was not his forte. He sold the farm, returned to Auburn and resumed his vocation as contractor and builder of bridges and bridge abutments. Of the later he was introducer of iron work and a set of these abutments is in use at Auburn Junction.

There was a time when Alpheus Wheelock had a monopoly of bridge construction in DeKalb county and an instance of his work is a bridge over Cedar creek on East Ninth street.

Growing old, the veteran bridge builder withdrew from public life and his later years have been passed in retirement.

Following the death of his wife in 1898, he found a home with a daughter, Mrs. Clara Showalter, and in the belief that his works will speak for him he has been content to leave the verdict of his fidelity to the public interest with posterity and unpaid awaits the coming of the Messenger to call him away.

Alpheus Wheelock was one of DeKalb's prominent citi- ge in the works of pub- r so he lived to be the r of changes and of work already passed into and luable part of the his- urn and DeKalb county.

COUNTY OFFICES ARE CLOSED

Officials Request None to Call, Except Those who Have Business that Must be Transacted, Because of Confusion that Prevails in Bringing Order out of Chaos.

SPECIAL LAW REGARDING RECORDS BEING INVESTIGATED

Administrators, Etc. Must Re-execute Bonds or Appointments are Vacated--Officials Must, Too, to Escape Fines--Legislature May have to Help Out Clerk of Courts.

For several days while the carpenters are at work making shelves and partitions in the assembly room for the county officials, there will be too much confusion and noise to properly transact public business It will take several days before the books can be arranged. In the clerk's, sheriff's and auditor's offices the destruction of blanks will stay all kinds of business until the new blanks can be printed. The public officials all join in the request that people having business requiring the attention of county officers, wait until Friday when some sort of order will be restored. Only business of the most urgent notice will be looked after. Deputy Clerk Husselman made a trip to Angola Tuesday morning and brought back with him samples of all kinds of blanks used in his office. The several officers are beseiging THE DISPATCH office for printed matter, blanks, etc., in order to take up the routine of business. Nearly everything of this kind was destroyed.

Must Re-execute Bonds.

The loss of many of the records and papers in the clerk's office has caused considerable anxiety among those whose interests are involved.

The laws of Indiana point out the duty of certain officials when records or papers are lost or destroyed and it will be of interest to many to know that all administrators, executors and guardians whose bonds were burned in the fire, that within three months they must re-execute and a failure so to do vacates their appointment. All public officials whose bonds were on file with the clerk and have been destroyed must within twenty days file new bonds and for every day they fail so to do they will be subject to a fine. The only way to avoid a fine is by resignation. The bonds of justices of the peace, constables, notary public and others whose bonds are destroyed must pay some attention to this law to avoid liability.

Before any office shall be declared vacant or any official shall be fined they must have received a notice of the destruction of their bond. Where county records are destroyed other than court records the county commissioners designate a competent person to gather all evidence that will tend to establish what the destroyed records contained. Such commissioner cannot make any finding, his work ends in perpetuating all the evidence relating to the missing record and he will be allowed three dollars a day for his services.

When it comes to the knowledge of the court that certain records of the court or papers in the clerk's office are destroyed he will issue an order to the clerk to copy as much of the lost paper or record as can be found and the court will certify to the record or whatever part of it has been transcribed. The law requires that all parts of papers and records must be preserved until it is learned how much of them can be transcribed. When it is impossible to recover or to restore papers then parties in interest may file complaint asking for a reinstatement of the record and then all evidence is gathered and submitted to the court.

Decrees and wills and all other proceedings affecting real estate up to the close of the term of Mr. Austin were turned over to the recorder and were all recorded.

Official bonds, excepting guardians, are practically limited to four years. It matters not much about old judgments, they died at the end of ten years and must be reinstated.

The serious loss is actual court work of the last three years. Legislative action may be necessary to protect the clerk of the courts. He is responsible to the state for blank hunters' licenses destroyed by the fire.

The Insurance.

Interest centers around the insurance carried on the fixtures and records of the county lost in the Saturday night fire. The total amount of insurance carried was $6,830.19. It wasdistributed in the following agencies, Rickel, Humbolt; Rainier, St. Paul; Sprott, Germanian Milwaukee Mechanics; Baxter, Royal and Achen of Munich; Weaver, New York Home.

The insurance is distributed as follows: library, $500; recorder's records, $3000; clerk's fixtures and records, $1,833.19; auditor's office, $1,000; treasurer's office, $500.

The adjustors are expected to be on hand in a day or two and it is hoped that a fair adjustment will be made. No amount of money will ever replace what has been lost.

More Notes.

The Home Telephone company suffered a heavy loss by the fire. Its large cable on Ninth street went down and men worked night and day to re-establish service. More than that the linemen volunteered their service the night of the fire to lift the cable and wires from the electric light wires so the current could be turned on. It was thought there was no danger in so doing but one is hardly safe under such existing conditions, but danger or not Victor Thomas led in the raid on down wires.

The Bell linemen braved the same danger but this company's wires were not affected so much. So far as Manager VanFleit knows only one telephone was put out of business and that only temporarily. While it was believed that the Bell office would have to be vacated and while the girls were panic stricken, Manager VanFleit quieted them and had men ready to take them out the east window should it become necessary, and they settled down to work.

The city linemen were on duty, too, and every precaution against the loss of life was taken.

A rubber coat is missing from the firemen's equipment, hence if anyone has it, please return it, by request of the chief.

To the Indianapolis News, Senator Glenn VanAuken of this city said that his loss in the temporary court house Saturday night would reach $1,000.

Fire still prevails, but in a smothere state, on the site of the ruins. An eagle eye is constantly turned that way to prevent a spread. More water was thrown onto it Tuesday.

The first break in the fence encircling the court square was made when a section was cut away to effect an entrance to the temporary offices. This is on the south side of the building.

A two and a half inch water pipe in the north east corner of the McIntyre building broke off early during the fire and that much water went to waste and helped reduce the pressure and handicap the firemen.

G. O. Dennison, assisting county clerk, repaired the office seal Monday and the instrument was pressed into service Tuesday morning. The face of the seal is little damaged and the seal can be used on legal papers immediately.

A small army of carpenters were at work in the assembly room of the new court house Tuesday building partitions for the various county offices. The county treasurer purchased a small safe from Mrs. Lewis Bower which will answer the purposes of the office for the present.

Joe Williamson, the court bailiff, had his personal papers locked up in the court room and they are all gone. Deeds, pensions papers and discharges from the army are among the papers destroyed.

The first real official business transacted by the county auditor was the appointment of an assessor. Adam Liens of Richland township resigned the position as assessor of his township and the resignation reached Auditor Madden early Tuesday morning and he appointed Frank DeVinney to fill the vacancy.

The duplicate tax book of Waterloo is missing and it is thought that some one carried it away. The county treasurer requests any one having any knowledge of the whereabouts of the book to inform him at once.

Jacob Richards, who is employed at the new court house was unable to work Tuesday as the result of injuries sustained Saturday night. Richards was carrying records from the ill-fated building when he slipped and fell. He thought but little of his injuries then but Monday found that his shoulder blade had been cracked.

The First One.

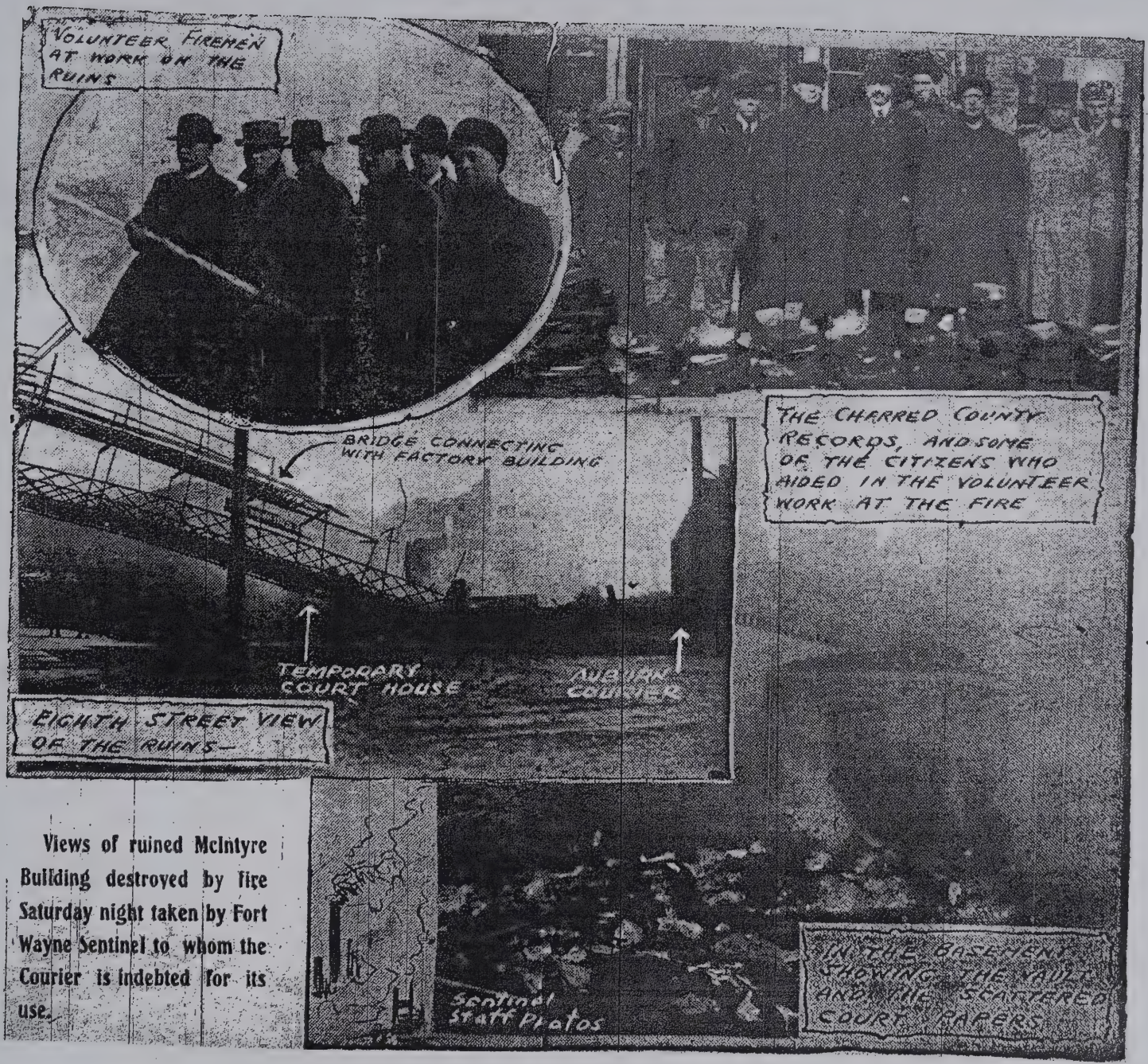
Business resumed at the county clerk's office temporarily and the first marriage license to be granted since the fire was carried away by Ora Harmon, aged 31, a barber from Edon, Ohio, and Florence Belle Fee, a year younger and a milliner of Hamilton. They called Tuesday afternoon.

LAST STONE SET

Harry Dawson Finished Stone Work On Court House Tuesday.

Harry Dawson, the stone setter, and his helpers, at the new court house, set the last stone for the building Tuesday forenoon and his work here is practically finished. The last stone was lifted in place by a small derrick, with a hand windlass attached and the stone was placed on the columns at the west entrance at the south side of the building.

When Mr. Dawson has finished pointing the stone, which will be within the next three days, he will go to Peru, Indiana, where he will superintend the laying of the stone for a new church being erected by Contractors J. B. Goodall and Son.


VOLUNTEER FIREMEN AT WORK ON THE RUINS
BRIDGE CONNECTING WITH FACTORY BUILDING
TEMPORARY COURT HOUSE
AUBURN COURIER
EIGHTH STREET VIEW OF THE RUINS—
THE CHARRED COUNTY RECORDS, AND SOME OF THE CITIZENS WHO AIDED IN THE VOLUNTEER WORK AT THE FIRE
IN THE BASEMENT SHOWING THE VAULT AND THE SCATTERED COURT PAPERS
Sentinel Staff Photos

Views of ruined McIntyre Building destroyed by fire Saturday night taken by Fort Wayne Sentinel to whom the Courier is indebted for its use.

(Smith, the Photographer.)

Scene of Saturday night's conflagration taken from the southwest corner of the devastated block. Looking northeast and east is the business district, all of which was threatened.

The Waterloo Press Thurs. Feb. 13, 1913

TEMPORARY COURT HOUSE BURNED TO THE GROUND

M'INTYRE BLOCK IN AUBURN

Scene of a Sweeping Conflagration--Will and Court Records Consumed

DOUBLE FABRIC TIRE CO. ARE HEAVY LOSERS

BUT THEY IMMEDIATELY ARISE FROM THE ASHES

COURIER CO. IS DESTROYED

And Other Concsrns Entailing a Loss of Nearly $100,000 with a Partial Insuranck--Fire Origin Unknown

Special Correspondence Waterloo Press

AUBURN, Feb. 10.—The worst fire in the history of Auburn, occurred Saturday evening. At about 6:30 o'clock fire broke out in the rear end of the Courier Co. plant, as near as can be ascertained, in the building owned by W. H. McIntyre, located on Eighth street. No one seems to know how the fire originated, and it was first discovered shortly after employes left the building and closed for the evening hour.

When the flames were discovered they were leaping high in the building, and it looked from the first that the entire building was doomed. There being no possible chance to save any salvage from the Courier Co. plant, an effort was at once organized to remove the belongings of the county, as they occupied the larger portion of the two floors of the building along the Eighth street side. The county records were the first things to be saved, and as many as possible were taken to places of safety. Some of the office furniture was dragged out into the street, but the fire was too hot to get them away and they were destroyed.

Just how many of the records were saved will be hard to tell, as it will take days to get all of the books and records of the county officers in shape to tell just what was lost. As fast as the records were carried out of the burning building they were taken to the new court house for safs keeping.

The flames were fanning fast and the firemen and citizens in general were soon driven at bay. The low water pressure from the city water plant rendered the fire department helpless in confining the fire to the north part of the building and beyond the fire wall. It soon crept into the south portion of the building, where was located the power plant and the Double Fabric Tire Co.'s offices and factory. Also the auto sales room of the McNabb & Carter garage. It was in this portion of the building that hard work was necessary to save any of the contents, and a corps of citizens worked heroically to carry out the office fixtures, safe, and order files belonging to the

Double Fabric Tire Co.

which occupied two floors. It is just at the season of the year when this factory was running at its height, employing about fifty men, all of whom are put out of employment for the present. Considerable of their property was taken from the building, although they had much valuable machinery that could not be removed, and thousands of dollars worth of finished products and raw materials were in the building. Their loss will be heavy and hard to estimate on account of the loss of business, which amounts at this season to from $40,000 to $50,000 per month. The Double Fabric Tire Co. carried an insurance aggregating $16,000.00.

Work in the office force was resumed Monday morning in temporary office quarters secured in the gas company's office on Cedar street, at the corner of Seventh. Mr. Murray, president of the company, was in Chicago attending the auto show, and he was advised of the fire, and came home Sunday. With Mr. Willennar, the two men are busy today securing temporary quarters for the location of their factory, and they have placed orders for new machinery and materials, and as soon as their factory can be organized they will begin operations. The company is comparatively a new concern, and is one of the most successful enterprises ever launched in Auburn. Their business extends all over the United States and to foreign countries, and phœnix like, they have already risen to meet the emergencies and will take care of their business without any extended interruptions.

The County Suffers Loss

One of the losses that cannot be estimated in dollars and cents is that which occurred to the county. Most of the records and reports in the offices of the recorder, sheriff, auditor and treasurer, were saved, including the papers in connection with the erection of the new court house, tax duplicates, etc. Many reports of older date were destroyed however, and many of them would have proven to be a valuable asset to the county in years to come, not at this time anticipated.

Clerk's Office in a Jungle

The office of the county clerk being on the second floor with the court room, the salvage amounted to but little in comparison with the many

SEVENTEEN YEARS AGO

It was seventeen years ago Wednesday morning at an early hour that Waterloo suffered such a fire loss as did Auburn last Saturday evening. The fire originated in the brick business block on the east side of Wayne street, and the loss was a total one, entailing a property loss amounting to about the same as did the Auburn fire. THE PRESS was among the losers in this fire, and can well sympathize with the unfortunate business men of Auburn in this their worst fire disaster.

records that were lost, including, it is believed, most if not all of the late will records that cannot be replaced. The court library was also lost, and the estimate of the loss to the county on the clerk's office alone, including the court room, is hard to tell at this time. It will reach into the thousands of dollars. The county carried an insurance amounting to but $6,000 on office fixtures and supplies, which will fall far short of covering the material loss to the county, let alone the inconvenience of the loss of the records that cannot be replaced nor value put thereon.

The McNabe & Carter Auto Sales Co. located in the southwest corner of the building, fronting on Ninth street and along Jackson street, is also a heavy loser, with no insurance. There were several automobiles in the sales room, some of which were taken from the burning building, but the intense heat forced the salvage workers away so that the cars were practically a total loss. One car belonging to A. L. Murrap, president of the Double Fabric Tire Co., stored in the sales room, was burned.

The Courier Co. Had a Little Insurance

and their loss will be several thousand dollars. A linotype in the Courier Co., two cylinder presses, and several jobbers, with other machinery, type and stock, was a total loss, nothing being saved except two type writers in the front office. The Courier Co. was owned by W. H. McIntyre, who carried $1,500 insurance, and Monte L. Green, the business manager, gave THE PRESS the statement that it would only pay half of the loss of the linotype alone. The Courier will be continued for the present by the present owners and management, being issued from the Dispatch office. It is understood that a stock company is being formed to continue the paper, and it is likely a merger will be formed with The Dispatch.

Origin a Mystery

There seems to be some doubt in the minds of some of the men interested in the conflagration, as to where the fire started. Mr. Greene and employes of the Courier Co., declare that the fire did not start from their office, but are unable to tell just where it originated. Others who claimed to be on the scene first, say that the fire was discovered to be forcing its way upwards from the rear of the Courier press room, near where a gasoline engine stood.

There seems to be no question but that some inflamable matter exploded, which caused the fire to make such headway through the building, and as yet this remains to be solved.

Water Pressure Was Low

The water works pressure was low, and the fire fighters had a difficult time in getting sufficient water to keep the adjoining building from burning. It looked for a time as though the whole business section of Auburn would be destroyed.

Waterloo Tax Duplicate

was destroyed in the fire, and with this exception it is believed that all of the records and books of value in the treasurer's office were saved. The auditor's records will enable them to make a new duplicate for Waterloo, so that there will be no one missed at tax paying time.

In addition to the block that was a total loss there are other losses to adjacent property which will amount to a considerable. Broken glass in all of the buildings across the streets, opposite the McIntyre building, was caused by the excessive heat, and a number of buildings were badly scorched, and in several instances they were on fire, which was extinguished by a bucket brigade. The volunteer fire department at Garrett was phoned for, and they responded and lent such aid as was possible for them to render. Many people came from different parts of the country to see the ruins and witness the conflagration, which lighted up the skies for miles around.

Loss to the Building

is complete. The building was owned by W. H. McIntyre, and was formerly occupied by the McIntyre company as a carriage factory, but of late has been used for the purposes stated above by the various occupants of the building. Mr. McIntyre carried insurance on the building amounting to $20,000, which will partially cover the loss.

Total Loss $100,000.00

The total loss of the fire is difficult to estimate, but will aggregate $100,000, considering the loss to the county, and all others concerned.

For the present the county offices will take up rooms in the new court house, using the assembly room, which is nearly completed. This will no doubt handicap the workmen in completing the work on the new court house, but it will necessitate the completion of the building as soon as possible, and no time will be lost in its completion.

Every Name Index

Austin, Mr. 9
Baker 5 7 8
Baxter, Miles 5
Boland, Michael 5
Bower, Mrs. Lewis 10
Brandon, Fire Chief 6
Brown, C. M. 5
Brugh, George 6
Buchanan, J. E. 3
Butler, H. E. 6
Carter 13 14
Carter, Mr. 5
Carter, T. A. 5
Cosper, James R. 9
Cramer, J. Frank 7
Cramer, John 4
Culbertson, H. R. 5
Davenport, Sam 6
Dawson, Harry 10
DeHority, W. D. 8
Dennison, G. O. 5 10
DeVinney, Frank 10
Dilgard 6 7
Enzor, Hiram 4
Farley, Paul 4
Fee, Florence Belle 10
Ferrell, Foraker 7
Gale 6
Goodall, Contractor 8
Goodall, J. B. 5
Goodall, J. B. (and sons) 10
Green, Monte L. 4 14
Grube, Arthur 5
Hamilton 6
Harmon, Ora 10
Haverstock, Samuel 5
Henry, John 9
Hicks, Ed. W. 5
Hoff 7
Hoff, Frank 5
Hoff, Sheriff 6
Husselman, Deputy Clerk 9
James 4
Kettering, Clayton 5
Kuhlman, George 5
Leasure, John 6
Liens, Adam 10
Lincoln, Pres. Abraham 7
Madden, Auditor 6 10
McCord 6
McCord, Victor 5
McFarland 9
McIntosh, W. H. 8
McIntyre 4 7 8 10 11
McIntyre, Mr. 8
McIntyre, W. H. 3 5 7 8 13 14
McKay, Rosanna 8
McNabb 13 14
McNabb, Mr. 5
McNabb, W. C. 5
Miller 5 7 8
Morton, Gov. O. P. 9
Murrap (Murray), A. L. 14
Murray, A. L. 5
Murray, Mr. 5 13
Nebelung 8
Nebelung, Fred J. 5
Nelson, Stanley 6
Oatis, Vincent P. 6
Oberlin, Mr. 5
Oberlin, Roy 5
Powers, Judge 6
Pyle, Frank 6
Richards, Jacob 10
Schabb Bros. 5
Schabb, William 5
Sheffer, J. W. 5
Showalter, Clara 9
Smith 5 7 8 12
Stutz, Tom 7
Swineford 6
Swineford 7
Thomas, Victor 10
VanAuken, Glenn 10
VanAuken, Senator 8
VanFleit, Manager 10
Weaver, Wayne 4 7
Wheelock, Alpheus 8 9
Willennar, Mr. 5 13
Willennar, W. H. 5
Williamson, Joe 10
Winebrenner, Glenn 4
Winebrenner, Howard 4
Zent, I. M. 5
Zimmerman 6 8
Zimmerman, Mrs. John 6

Note: Does not include index for pages 2 and 3
These pages are covered elsewhere.

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